

Referral & Review

REVIEW OF NEW INVESTIGATOR R01s

Guidelines for Reviewers

New investigators are important to the future of biomedical research. A new investigator is one who has not previously served as a principal investigator on any PHS-supported research project other than a small grant (R03), an Academic Research Enhancement Award (R15), an exploratory/developmental grant (R21), or certain research career awards associated principally with physicians, dentists, or veterinarians at the beginning of their research career (K01, K08, K22, and K23). Current or past recipients of Independent Scientist and other non-mentored career awards (K02 and K04) are not considered new investigators.

New investigators are typically less experienced in the preparation of applications and expression of their research plans. To ensure fair reviews for new investigators, NIH application forms have a check box to indicate new investigator status and thus ensure that reviewers can readily identify applications from new investigators. The biosketch should also be used to identify new investigators. All investigators should be evaluated in a manner appropriate for the present stage in their careers.

IMPLEMENTATION: When reviewing these applications, reviewers should keep in mind the experience of and the resources available to the new investigator. When considering an application from a new investigator, the five [updated review criteria](#) must be evaluated in a manner appropriate to the expectations for and problems likely to be faced by a new investigator. Specifically, when considering:

Approach: more emphasis should be placed on demonstrating that the techniques/approaches are feasible than on preliminary results that develop a hypothesis. Assessment of feasibility should be based more on rationale and training than on preliminary experimental data.

Investigators: more emphasis should be placed on training and research potential than on track record and number of publications.

Environment: there should be evidence that the necessary space, equipment, and time to perform the research are available to the principal investigator.

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